

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
Advisory Council

RESEARCH ACTIVITY PANEL

Final Meeting Minutes
Friday, July 21, 1995

The Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council Research Activity Panel (RAP) met on Friday, July 21, 1995 at the Elkhorn Slough Reserve in Watsonville, California. The meeting arrangements were made by Aaron King, RAP Executive Coordinator.

Members in attendance were:

Greg Cailliet, RAP Chair, Moss Landing Marine Labs
Jim Harvey, Moss Landing Marine Labs
Ken Parker, NOAA Ocean Applications Branch
Andrew DeVogelaere, ESNERR and Foundation
Jim Rote, California State University Monterey Bay/NOAA
Deborah Johnston, CA DFG/Monterey
Mark Stephenson, CA DFG/Monterey
Jan Roletto, GFNMS
Gary Sharp, CIRIOS
Steve Eittreim, USGS
Don Potts, UCSC
Les Strnad, CA Coastal Commission
Chris Harrold, Monterey Bay Aquarium

Special Guests in attendance included:

Suzy Worcester, UCSB
Milos Radakovich, BAYNET
Rachel Saunders, CMC
Ellen Faurot-Daniels, Friends of the Sea Otter
John Brookes, "Westlands" Company
Jennifer Dugan, CINMS/UCSB

Research Activity Panel members not in attendance:

George Boehlert, NOAA/NMFS/PFEG
Dennis Powers, Hopkins Marine Station
Terry Jackson, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
Patricia Port, Department of the Interior
Karen Worcester, Morro Bay Foundation
Bruce Robison, MBARI
Rick Starr, University of California, Sea Grant
Laura Ehret, Naval Postgraduate School

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 9:15 a.m.

II. APPROVAL OF JUNE MEETING MINUTES

The minutes from the June 23, 1995 meeting were approved as amended

III. QUICK INFORMATION DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Report on the June 30 Sanctuary Advisory Council meeting (Cailliet) --

The Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council (SAC) met on Friday, June 30 at the Crossroads Community Room in Carmel, California from 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Highlights from the meeting included:

- Ed Brown, Vice-President of Planning for the Pebble Beach Corporation, was sworn in as the new Tourism Representative to the Council. As the former Regional Director for the California Coastal Commission, Mr. Brown, was involved in the establishment of the Sanctuary and understands the need to bring the tourism industry in as an active and critical player in the effort to protect and manage the Sanctuary;
- Public Comments included:
 - 1) a recommendation to present community service awards; and
 - 2) a request for Council support in cleaning up a shoreline land-fill that has become exposed due to erosion and is spilling into the Sanctuary. Council members requested that there be a more complete update on the situation and proposed solutions at the August meeting;
- The Sanctuary Advisory Council Retreat was productive and another half-day session to finalize protocols and improvement of PR efforts will be scheduled for sometime in the near future;
- A discussion of threatened budget cuts and Department of Commerce reorganization culminated in the Council directing that letters in support of NOAA and the National Marine Sanctuaries Program be sent to appropriate Congressional Representatives. The Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) offered their help in producing and sending the letters;
- An update on the marketing of the Sanctuary license plates proved that the program is going well. Advisory Council members challenged each other to personally purchase a plate and to sell as many as possible;
- The Alternate Funding Task Force is working on alternate ways to raise money -- they have identified the establishment of a Sanctuary Foundation as the number one priority;
- There was an informative update on the Water Quality Protection Program (WQPP) that was similar to the report provided to the Research Activity Panel at the June meeting;
- An update on the status of the Joint Vessel Traffic Study (JVTS) revealed that the report is moving through the signatory process. Les Strnad provided additional information on the JVTS since the Council meeting, stating that there will be joint stakeholders' workshops taking place this fall. Les offered to keep the working groups informed;

- A report on the Piedras Blancas Elephant Seal situation stated that negotiations with the Hearst Corporation are continuing. The Council directed that the Hearst Corporation be invited to the July meeting to provide their perspectives on the issue;
- Mr. Pete Bontadelli, an Administrator from the California Department of Fish and Game's Oil Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR), provided a detailed review of OSPR's Coastal Protection Plan;
- Terry Jackson presented the Sanctuary Manager's report mentioning that the issues of shark chumming and jade collection were moving slowly through NOAA;
- During a report on the jet ski regulations, Council members were informed that the Sanctuary will be placing buoys to demarcate the thrill craft use zones. Council members requested that the buoys also be used for real-time monitoring purposes and suggested that the Research Activity Panel consider action on this.

The next meeting of the Advisory Council is scheduled for Friday, July 28, 1995 in the Hudson House at Pt. Lobos State Reserve.

B. Sanctuary Marine Mammal Research Funds Update (King) -- A Broad Agency Announcement has been released. A Selection Evaluation Board (SEB) will include representatives from the three northern California Sanctuaries. As the RAP would like to be involved in the proposal selection process, it will recommend 2-3 individuals -- either RAP members or designees of the panel -- to the Sanctuary manager to act as advisors to the SEB. The issue will be placed on the agenda for the August meeting. RAP members were reminded that the deadline for proposals is August 24.

C. Cambria Desalination Plant Update (Rote) -- Due to the number of discrepancies regarding the proposed Cambria Desalination Plant project, RAP members decided to hold off any action until the information is clarified.

Problems associated with the project include:

- 1) a lack of concrete information about the project details;
- 2) a change in amount of discharge than was originally reported;
- 3) a notice that San Simeon wants to buy into the project thus changing the nature of the original design; and,
- 4) the project planners only studied the ocean currents for three months, neglecting to consider changes that occur throughout the course of a year.

Jim informed the RAP that the subcommittee assigned to investigate the project sent a letter asking for clarification of the many discrepancies found in the plan. Furthermore, there will be a meeting with the project planners on August 10 to learn more about what is being considered.

Les Strnad recommended the following: 1) procedures should be implemented for interagency coordination when things like this are proposed; and, 2) that the Sanctuary Advisory Council and Sanctuary staff be consulted. He also mentioned that the District engineer admitted that correct procedure was not followed and that the project supervisors want to send a revised written description of their project to the CCC.

D. Channel Islands NMS Research Program (Dugan) -- Jennifer Dugan, Research Coordinator for the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary (CINMS), provided an update on her efforts to form a Research Activity Panel for the CINMS and a contract to develop a plan for site characterization studies in the Channel Islands. RAP members encouraged her to keep up her efforts and commented that a working group might enhance communication efforts among the scientists in the Channel Islands region.

RAP members recommended that Jennifer talk to Aaron King and Andrew DeVolgaleare for more information about the logistics of organizing the research community.

E. NURP Update and Equipment Pool List (Wheat) -- Due to travel requirements, Geoff cannot report to the RAP until later in 1995.

F. Research Coordinator Status (King) -- efforts are continuing to have a Research Coordinator in place by early August. The Selection Evaluation Board (SEB) and the Advisors met to rank the finalists and begin the contract negotiating process. Greg commented that the selection process appears to be a good, solid procedure.

G. The Marine Researchers Guide (King)-- is ready to go. Interns are working on preparing a database server for the website.

There are about 260 people on the list. Corrections, edits, additions and deletions should be e-mailed to Aaron at mbnms@igc.apc.org so that he can make the adjustments.

H. Electronic update (King)-- Aaron reported that the Sanctuary's temporary website address is: <http://montereybay.nos.noaa.gov>.

I. Permit Report (King)- RAP members were provided with a full permit report. Questions should be directed to Scott Kathey at 647-4251.

J. Institutional Permit Status (King) -- Greg informed RAP members that he had drafted a letter for Karin Strasser Kauffman's signature on behalf of the Sanctuary Advisory Council to Charles Wahle concerning the inconvenient and lengthy delay of the Institutional Permit Process, by the Washington office (Big NOAA).

RAP members reiterated that had the Institutional Permit Process been in place many current problems could have been avoided. The panel would like to have the institutional framework separated out of the overall process, thus allowing the local community to proceed with the permit process while the details are hammered out in Washington, D.C.

Greg asked that Charles Wahle be contacted in person by the Advisory Council Chair and that there be a report on the response at the July Council meeting.

K. Monterey Bay Research Symposium (Parker/Starr) -- event organizers are still looking for a keynote speaker for Saturday morning. It was suggested that White House Chief of Staff Leon Panetta be invited. RAP members requested that Jo Stallard extend the invitation as a personal friend to Mr. Panetta. (NOTE:

The date for the Conference is now February 9-10, due to Conference Center scheduling.)

Greg commented that there was a real effort to get everyone involved in the conference and to give plenty of advance notice of planning meetings

L. Research Proposal Review (King) -- The San Andreas project is progressing forward, although there still need to be some changes to the letter to Jill McCarthy. Terry has decided not to sign it because of conflict of interest, but would like it to go forward from the Research Activity Panel.

M. Fort Ord Update (Eittreim) -- The Army has agreed to contribute ~\$150k for a number of studies in the marine restricted zone off of Fort Ord. Studies from the RAP that will be considered include:

- 1) a multi-beam bathymetric study of the outer Monterey canyon area - Silicon Graphics are involved with the project. RAP members are hoping that it will lead to a nice visual presentation;
- 2) a series of studies by Mark Stephenson and colleagues of the toxicology of mud using the existing samples taken during the recent McArthur cruise. They will also be using samples taken by the Pt. Sur;
- 3) an expansion of fish collections studies by Greg Cailliet and his graduate students, who will send samples to independent labs for analysis. The research will try to determine levels of potential toxins and to discover the cause of lesions and other markings found on flatfish recently;
- 4) high resolution side-scan surveys and magnetic intensity target;
- 5) an analysis of the sediment samples taken off of the McArthur.

The RAP was informed that the sampling projects have been designed to provide a wide distribution of the area for comparison reasons.

N. Research Budget Resolution Amendment (King) -- in an attempt to streamline the budget process and to institute, in writing, a method for feedback from the scientists who receive funds from the RAP, a letter stipulating RAP expectations was presented by MBNMS staff and approved without discussion.

O. ATOC Update (King) -- Aaron stated that the necessary permits from the Sanctuary office have been issued and that ATOC is clearing its final obstacles. Charles Wahle asked for a mailing list of interested parties who should receive copies of relevant data on the ATOC project for FYI purposes. Contact Aaron King at 647-4257 for more information.

IV. LONGER DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Acoustic Study in the MBNMS (Lashkari) -- A discussion of acoustic study in the Sanctuary was postponed. Dr. Khosrow Lashkari will be invited to the August meeting.

B. Mussel Watch Recommendation (King/Cailliet) -- RAP members defined the lack of concrete information about the Mussel Watch Program's goals and specific needs as an obstacle to taking formal measures in support of the program.

Members requested that the Mussel Watch program be given a good, hard review before the working group endorses it. A subcommittee composed of Mark Stephenson as the Chair, Pat Cotter, Jan Roletto, Chris Harrold, Deborah Johnston, and Andrew DeVogalaere were directed to produce a written report, describing the utility of the Program and an outline of its needs. The written review and oral presentation will be on the agenda of the next RAP meeting. Enough information should be provided so that the RAP can make a responsible recommendation to the Sanctuary Advisory Council.

Questions to be addressed in the report should include the following:

- What are the goals of the program?
- What have been the accomplishments?
- What is the original mission?
- How should the program change to meet future needs as it relates to the objectives and protection of the sanctuary?
- What kind of optimum program is needed at this time?

C. BAYNET (Saunders) -- Rachel Saunders introduced the newest volunteer program, BAYNET, and briefly described its mission and concept. The program has been contracted out to Milos Radakovich, a local naturalist and educator.

Rachel and Milos stated that the program will focus on raising public awareness of the MBNMS by placing volunteers on the shoreline to interact with visitors and residents.

BAYNET is currently in the process of identifying prime spots in the Sanctuary to place their volunteers. Approximately 25 volunteers will be required to attend 36 hours of training beginning in mid-September. It has been suggested that the first cadre of volunteers come from the already trained docents for the Aquarium and State parks. Training will be a combination of lectures and in-the-field experience. Instead of duplicating efforts regarding curriculum and texts for the course, BAYNET will use existing material and will develop a citizens guide of the 25 most often questions about the MBNMS.

RAP members were assured that BAYNET has been and will continue to work with the Sanctuary office.

Volunteers will be wearing easily identifiable jackets so that they can be recognized at locations all around the Sanctuary. The geographic area of initial focus will be the Pacific Grove and Monterey shoreline.

With respect to BAYNET's seemingly similarity to the Save Our Shores (SOS) Sanctuary Steward Program, Milos and Rachel responded that BAYNET will focus on shoreline interpretive programs, whereas the Steward's concentrate on presentations to schools, community groups, and some publications.

RAP members reiterated the same concerns they had for the Sanctuary Steward Program, i.e. quality control of the information and prevention of promoting personal agendas. Moreover, the panel requested that the BAYNET field guide contain some reference to the importance and accessibility of research

There will be a formal introduction of BAYNET at a meeting scheduled for August 8 from 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. at the Moss Landing Harbor District Office.

D. Monterey Underwater Park Proposal Review for RAP Consideration (DeVogelaere) -- Ed Cooper and Kevin McDonald have proposed an underwater park where fishing of any kind will be prohibited. RAP members commented that the fish population declines and other reported damage described in the proposal was not scientifically backed up, and required research and documentation. The RAP declined to write a letter of endorsement, as a group, on the grounds that there isn't sufficient scientific evidence for the proposal at this time. Furthermore, the function of the RAP as a source of endorsement on this type of project was raised and questioned in terms of its appropriateness.

With respect to RAP action concerning the proposal, the following was recommended:

- that interactive research be permitted in the proposed park;
- that Ed and Kevin determine in detail the steps required to establish an underwater park and the jurisdiction of the state; and,
- that Terry report to RAP at the next meeting the Sanctuary's position on this proposal.

Furthermore, the RAP indicated that the issue is one that concerns the Conservation Working Group (CWG) and requested that the CWG be involved in the analysis of the project.

The RAP also decided to inform Ed Cooper of the Panel's concern for the underwater park's implications on research in the area, and to request a report on fish populations from the Hopkins Marine Station representative.

E. Discussion of RAP Membership for the Regional National Underwater Research Program (NURP) Representative (Cailliet) -- A motion was approved to accept the NURP Representative as the newest member of the Research Activity Panel.

RAP members questioned at what point does the size of membership in an organization become unwieldy. Greg agreed to revisit the issue at a later meeting.

F. Association for the Advancement of American Science (AAAS) Conference at San Jose State University (SJSU) (Rote) -- The conference is scheduled for June 1996 at San Jose State University. Abstracts are due by October 15, 1995. Jim suggested that this would be a good event for the Monterey Bay area research community to participate in and to promote the work being done in the California Sanctuaries, such as: the site characterization project; the Fort Ord research; and, the work from the McArthur Cruise. Moreover, Jim commented that a good project for the new Research Coordinator would be to develop a contact list and to work with the AAAS on a package for the conference. Gary Sharp volunteered to help coordinate this procedure.

G. McArthur 1995 Cruise Report (King) -- the cruise report is nearly complete. Members were reminded to send in reports if they had not already done so. A discussion of cruise time for next year will be an agenda topic for a future meeting.

H. Sanctuary Advisory Council Annual Citizen Achievement Award (Cailliet)-- At the most recent Sanctuary Advisory Council meeting, annual community service awards were proposed. For awards that concern the research community, the RAP

endorsed the issue and will assist in the award selection process when directed by the Advisory Council Chair. Greg will keep the RAP informed about the process.

V. OLD BUSINESS/ NEW BUSINESS

Nothing was reported.

VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM PANEL MEMBERS

1) The California Biodiversity Council will meet in Monterey during March 1996 to discuss biodiversity. John Brookes will provide more information to Aaron at the Sanctuary office.

2) Jim Rote - a Sea Otter or Killer Whale are currently under consideration as the mascot for California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB).

The meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane M. DeLay,
SAC Coordinator